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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the present structure of foreign language education is inefficient and needs to be restructured in the direction of differentiated staffing. A model of such an organizational framework is presented, along guidelines which include: involvement of teachers in decision-making; a hierarchy based on professional, preservice, and paraprofessional levels; career incentives; and accomodation of student and teacher needs and abilities. Implications of this study include: the need for restructured teacher-training programs; new certification measures; the need for further research and experimentation in differentiated staffing for foreign language instruction. (AM)

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DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Paper

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A SELECTED REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

A new concept in the structure of education with a promise for a better management of learning, and recognition of a teacher's competence, potential, and professional attitude is explained in differentiated staffing. Differentiated staffing broadly perceived can change the structure of education by authorizing teachers to create more responsive educational programs, and to transform an obsolete administrative structure. Though there is no one definition of differentiated staffing, one of the premises underlying the concept is that teachers should carry increased decision-making powers in the planning and execution of curricula and instruction. Therefore, a new definition of the teacher's role will have to include different kinds of career patterns that are more diverse, and would consider diffusing the decision-maker's role throughout the teaching ranks. Innovative foreign language programs stressing Individualized Instruction through multi-media small groups, multi-level grouping, or a non-graded program emphasize the changing role of teachers and the use of paraprofessionals.

The problems confronting the teaching of foreign languages necessitate:

1. A reassessment of its learning objectives, conditions, and methodology
2. A reexamination of the role of the language teacher in public education

3. A restructuring of foreign language programs to meet the needs and interests of all students.

In view of the added dimensions and growth of foreign language programs, the need for leadership cannot be overstressed. A foreign language trained leader at the local level is required for expediting change and giving it direction. Furthermore, there is a need to explore the variety of tasks assumed by foreign language supervisors, as well as teachers. Each school system should recognize the importance of having its own coordinator or director of foreign languages, for the development and maintenance of a well organized and carefully articulated program.

In determining the strengths and characteristics of a foreign language staff, it is advised that the competencies and skills of professional members be analyzed and used in such a way that a maximum number of pupils would benefit from these special talents. Therefore, in order to effect significant improvement in foreign language education, priority should be given to the development of various staffing patterns.

SURVEY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STAFFING PROCEDURES

As one aspect of an investigation a survey was conducted on foreign language staffing procedures and patterns in 120 selected secondary schools. Two thirds of the schools were randomly chosen from a list of progressively oriented systems. The other third was chosen from a list provided by the Resource Center on Staff Utilization at the University of Massachusetts.

The list contained the names of school systems funded by the U.S. Office of Education, under School Personnel Utilization Projects, 1971-1972.

The primary purpose of the investigation was:

1. To find out to what extent foreign language teachers are responsible for curriculum planning and instructional decision-making
2. To investigate the duties, responsibilities, and tasks of foreign language teachers
3. To discover to what degree the services of paraprofessionals (teacher aides, native informants, etc.) were being utilized.

The results of this study showed that there is a need to develop a differentiated staffing model, whereby the competencies and proficiencies of professionals and paraprofessionals be defined in relation to their duties and responsibilities.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIFFERENTIATED ROLES

In any proposal for a differentiated staff there must be some kind of structural design or framework differentiating the responsibilities and duties of those involved in the educational process. At present, schools involved in converting to differentiated staffing require the use of consultant assistance and their supervisory staff to train teachers for this process. A California system reported that it divides its in-service training in two major phases: leadership and staff workshops.

Administrators, senior and master teachers are trained, who, in turn, train the total staff. The latest instructional techniques and content are communicated within the school system and developed into training sessions, taught by master and senior teachers.

It is evident that there is need for teacher education programs to make provisions for the training of teachers for differentiated roles. Pre-service and in-service education for teachers and paraprofessionals should include components on task analysis, design of models, curriculum development and modification, design of resource centers, organization of horizontal and vertical differentiation, and human relations of teaching in hierarchical teams.

In its concern for improved certification procedures, the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education (MACE) presented a proposal keyed to a plan for differentiated staffing. The plan recommends four levels of licenses:

Internship Licenses for those in training

Associate Teacher Licenses for beginning teachers

Professional Licenses for those who demonstrate ability to handle professional assignments or supervision

Specialist Licenses for high level teachers and those with particular kinds of specialization.

The existence of the four distinct levels of certification would call for specific role definitions, clearer behavior expectations, concrete understandings of interrelationships among various staff roles, and new thinking about salaries.

DEFINITION OF A MODEL

It is believed that models of differentiated staffing would provide the impetus of a new kind of school structure which includes: hierarchy of authority, specialization, rules for incumbents, and procedural specifications. A distinction can be made between vertical and horizontal differentiation in explaining that a vertical model holds promise of a career ladder, and extends the teacher's influence and authority to be equal or surpass that of some administrators in matters pertaining to curriculum. Therefore, if teaching is to come of age, reform models of differentiated staffing must increase the line staff structure of the educational organization with teachers involved in the decision-making process.

A BASIS FOR A MODEL IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STAFF DIFFERENTIATION

Though effective foreign language programs exist in numerous schools, it is believed that a conceptual model for differentiated staffing may be constructed which would enhance the effectiveness of these programs.

As the purpose of this paper is to present an organizational framework focused on staff assignments, an attempt has been made to conceptualize a model accounting for professional and paraprofessional responsibilities of staff members in a foreign language program, with a component for teaching preparation.

The continuous problems in foreign language education and information on current trends with relation to staffing

arrangements serve as a basis. It is assumed that this framework can eliminate many of the present problems, provide better instruction, and enhance the quality and professional status of the teacher.

Staffing considerations involving teachers in activities and responsibilities beyond the classroom, may be a possible aspect in the solution of problems and needs in the field. Therefore, it seems logical to hypothesize that differentiated staffing can be appropriately implemented in a foreign language program to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of instruction.

For the purpose of this plan, a vertical prototype has been developed, for it is believed that through this framework a breakthrough in the teaching of foreign languages and the general status of the foreign language profession can be realized.

The following are guidelines on which the model is based:

1. That the model involve the professional staff in the decision-making process of instruction

2. That the model embody a hierarchy based on three levels: professional, pre-service, and paraprofessional

3. That through the vertical hierarchy, provisions can be made to insure a career incentive for attracting and retaining outstanding foreign language teachers

4. That leadership be incorporated in the total structure of the plan, with a coordinator at the top of the hierarchy, followed by three professionals of equal status who will teach and perform other professional duties

5. That articulation and coordination of each course and level be a major function of the program, encompassing philosophy, methodology, and content matter

6. That the structure accommodate the individual needs, interests, and abilities of students

7. That the plan provide opportunities for teachers and resource personnel to express their specific talents, interests and competencies

8. That aspects of the components to the model be adapted to meet the needs of a given language program of any size, and in any school environment, traditional or flexibly scheduled

9. That a component for the clinical training of pre-service teachers be incorporated, in an effort to prepare better future foreign language teachers under the direction of a clinical professor and that of master teachers involved in teacher preparation

10. That proficiencies and competencies suggested for the performance of duties by professional staff members be based upon the criteria established in the Modern Language Association Guidelines.

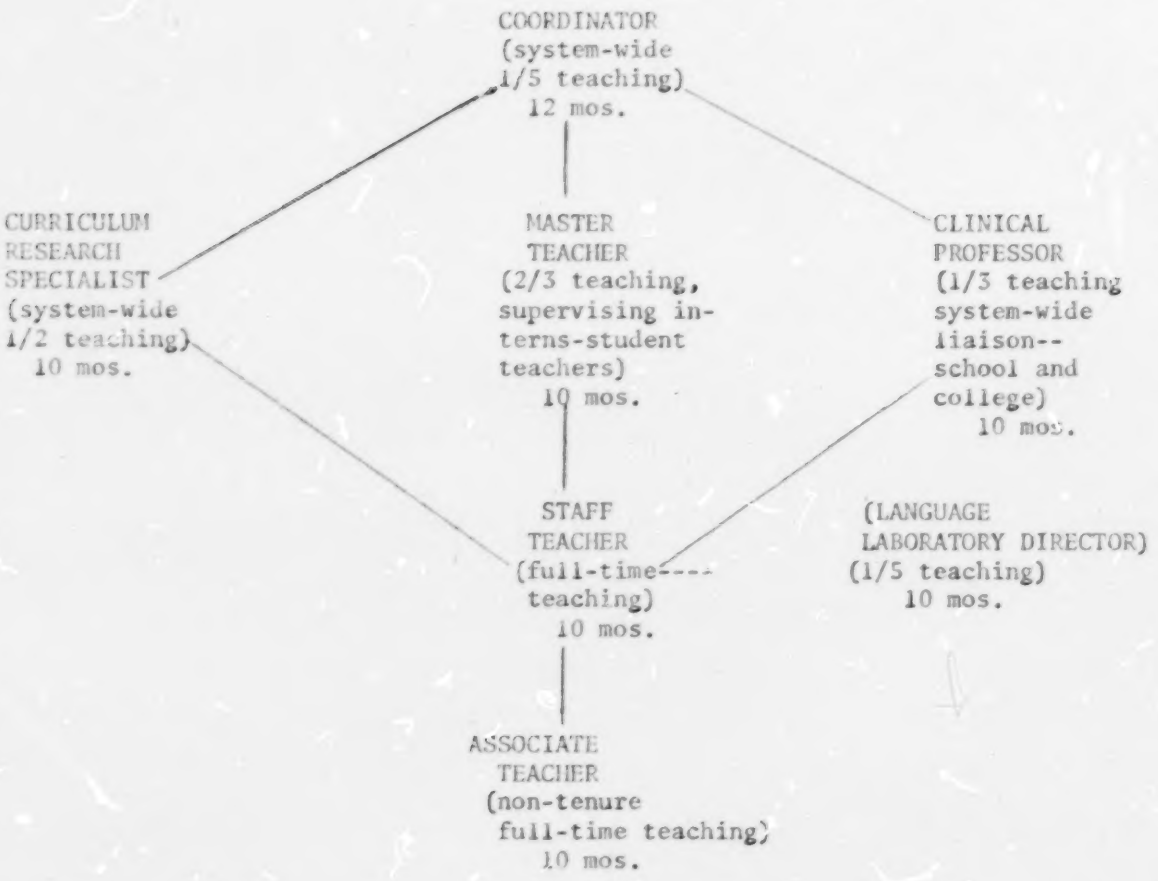
In essence, this plan presents opportunities for leadership. It provides coordination, articulation, group decision-making, and teacher responsibility for other professional tasks. Furthermore, it is assumed that the quality and status of the teacher should improve, since a career ladder is incorporated, permitting upward mobility in the classroom. Through the clinical and inservice components, progress and improvement in teacher preparation and training may be projected. Paraprofessionals will absorb the non-teaching chores of the teacher, and permit the professionals to concentrate their efforts on instructional matters.

TASK ANALYSIS

In the organization of a foreign language teaching staff, particularly where several teachers are engaged in teaching the same language, diverse patterns may be organized. Assignments and tasks may be divided among members of a teaching team to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

Therefore, a brief task analysis describing the positions on the plan will be summarized on the following page.

PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY



PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

STUDENT TEACHER
(3/5 teaching - 10 weeks)

INTERN
(4/5 teaching - 5 months)

PARAPROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

NATIVE INFORMANT
10 MOS.

TEACHER ASSISTANT
10 mos.

LABORATORY TECHNICIAN
10 mos.

STAFF SECRETARY
10 mos.

RESOURCE VOLUNTEERS

PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

Professionals should be certificated according to the proper certification requirements of each state. They should also meet state requirements at whatever levels of certification for differentiated staffing that may eventually be developed, in terms of assignments in foreign language teaching.

COORDINATOR OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The coordinator will function as the administrator of the foreign language program in the school or schools, and will be responsible only to the superintendent or assistant superintendent of schools in charge of instruction.

He teaches one class and insures coordination and articulation of the foreign language program on all levels of instruction.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CURRICULUM-RESEARCH SPECIALIST

The Curriculum-Research Specialist will be responsible to the coordinator and will work closely with the professional category. One of his functions will be to:

1. Introduce new concepts in learning, new materials, ideas on curriculum innovations, instructional media, and technology
2. He will also initiate and promote research projects in the program, and conduct pilot studies.

CLINICAL PROFESSOR

The clinical professorship is a joint appointment with the public school system and a nearby college or university involved in a teacher training program in foreign languages. Its purpose is to establish a closer professional relationship between the two institutions in an effort to provide a more sophisticated pre-service training experience for student teachers and/or interns.

MASTER TEACHER

The master teacher is responsible to the coordinator. He may serve as instructional leader of a language or be responsible for a particular level of achievement. This would depend on the overall size of the program, number of languages, levels, and sections offered.

He will plan with staff teachers to adapt instruction and innovative procedures according to the physical environment of the school, i.e. the functioning of large and small group instruction, team teaching, or individualized instruction in a flexible schedule, open classroom, or in a conventional structure of organization.

STAFF TEACHER

The largest group of professional members of a differentiated professional hierarchy are staff teachers who teach full-time, and

1. Implement the curriculum as designed and prescribed

2. They may participate in large, small group, and individualized instruction, and in the development of behavioral objectives, learning packages, instruments for evaluating performance, and diagnosis of learning problems.

THE ASSOCIATE TEACHER

The duties of the associate teacher are similar to those of the staff teacher, though his responsibility for curriculum planning and major decision-making is on a smaller scale.

THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY DIRECTOR

The language laboratory director is basically a foreign language teacher who can evaluate instructional media and new methods of applying technology to linguistic training. He may

1. Teach at least one class, and coordinate all the activities of the laboratory.

THE PRE-SERVICE TRAINING CATEGORY

STUDENT TEACHER

The student teacher spends eight to ten weeks of his senior year in training, under the direct supervision of a skilled master teacher. He teaches three classes and observes two other classes of skilled language teachers in order to gain further insight into various teaching techniques and activities involved on all levels of instruction.

THE INTERN

The intern has a one-semester teaching assignment in the department, for which he is paid a salary established by the school system. He works under the direction of a master teacher and the clinical professor.

THE PARAPROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

The purpose of a paraprofessional category is to free teachers from tasks that can be performed adequately by non-professional assistants. It is a method to improve efficiency and effectiveness, by allowing teachers time to concentrate on professional activities.

NATIVE INFORMANT

The native informant is a resource person who assists professional staff members in various activities. He is trained by teachers, and works under their direction. He may serve as a drill-master in small groups to reinforce the learning of material presented by the teacher; guide students in correct pronunciation; initiate conversational practice; stimulate small-group discussion in advanced groups, and prepare cultural information of current interests to be integrated into the courses or to be used in the resource center.

THE TEACHER ASSISTANT

The teacher assistant will serve on a part-time or full-time basis. He may classify and file instructional materials; prepare visuals; assist in operating A/V equipment; keep inventory of equipment, books and supplies; keep bulletin board updated with colorful posters and realia to help make the language classroom a cultural island; and assist in the scoring of standardized objective-type and criterion-reference tests.

THE LABORATORY TECHNICIAN

The laboratory technician will be responsible to the laboratory director, and will work with professional staff members and native informants in fulfilling their requests for time, equipment, and materials. He will operate on a full-time basis.

THE STAFF SECRETARY

The staff secretary will serve on a full-time basis, and perform professional and administrative clerical tasks.

RESOURCE VOLUNTEERS

Resource volunteers may be teachers from other departments or local residents with special talents, knowledge, or travel experience. They may be business or professional men and women, artists, museum lecturers, musicians, former newspaper correspondents and retired educators.

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A feature of this model is that every professional staff member must teach. Thus, anyone moving upward on the career ladder does not necessarily move out of the classroom. The model also illustrates that at the master teacher level the positions of curriculum-research specialist and clinical professor are of parallel importance, though their tasks differ.

In applying this theory to a situation a basic assumption must be made: that staffing considerations of a foreign language program are contingent upon:

1. The size and socio-economic structure of the community

2. The geographic situation of the school

3. The ability, interest and needs of students enrolled in the foreign language program

4. The availability of human and cultural resources.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it is believed that:

* The inefficiency of the present organizational structure necessitates a change in the deployment of manpower in terms of professional responsibilities

* If the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire public school process is to make substantial gains in response to challenges and demands, those with the expertise and knowledge should be permitted to raise the quality of foreign language instruction.

* There is a need for stronger leadership, closer supervision and group decision-making by those involved in the instructional procedure.

* Studies in innovative procedures reveal that present thinking is directed toward differentiating staff assignments.

* Differentiated staffing would offer greater opportunities for coordination, articulation, decision-making, and more efficient management of learning.

* Individual differences of learners would be accounted for, as provisions are made to fulfill the needs, interests, and abilities of all foreign language students.

* A more comprehensive and effective clinical training program for pre-service teachers should emerge from the cooperative efforts of clinical professors, master teachers, and the college or university personnel responsible for the preparation of language teachers.

* A career incentive should enhance professional and social status and further the retention of outstanding foreign language teachers in secondary education.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

TEACHER EDUCATION

The implications of this study would indicate that teacher education programs should recognize the need to reorganize their curriculums in order to prepare future teachers for differentiated roles. The creation of more extensive alliances between teacher-training institutions and local schools for this purpose would necessitate organizational changes on the part of both. A possibility of providing proper training for foreign language teachers entering a differentiated staff would be to analyze roles and establish criteria for performing particular tasks and duties. This would be essential to the further development of innovative teacher training procedures, and to the designing of responsibilities associated with differentiated staffing.

With regard to the support of clinical training for future teachers, the state should subsidize programs and school systems willing to develop clinical facilities for the proper training of student teachers and/or interns. This would encourage a closer professional partnership and role definition for those involved in teacher education in the schools and colleges.

CERTIFICATION

As for certification, the existence of levels in staff differentiation could encourage new measures in the licensure of teachers resulting in changes of certification patterns and requirements. Therefore, if performance, competence, and proficiency are to be considered in this process, criteria for professional performance should be developed by representative leaders in foreign language education and teachers of foreign languages.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Any proposal or theoretical study should be submitted to further research and experimentation. This model was developed for the purpose of eliminating some of the problems in foreign language education; to improve learning and teaching conditions in secondary foreign language programs; and to enhance the professional status of the teacher. Therefore, its degree of usefulness in the profession would be determined by its measure of success in situations willing to implement the concept or to conduct pilot studies in an effort to promote knowledge in Foreign Language Education.

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